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1900

LIFE AND SONG

POEMS

BY

ANNA R. HENDERSON

BUFFALO
CHARLES WELLS MOULTON
1900

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Index

	PAGE
Life and Song	9
Blossoms	20
Garner the Beautiful	22
Flowers by the Wayside	23
An Idyl of Spring	25
Fancies	27
A Picture	28
Balanced	29
Voices of the Tides	31
California Roses	34
West Virginia at the Columbian Exposition	35
First Settlers of Williamstown	38
Graves of Isaac and Rebecca Williams	44
Relic Day	46
What the Primrose Told	48
The Painter and Poet	49
Spain	51
Americans All	53
Raising the American Flag at Santiago	55
The Flag of Spain	57
The Field of Song	58
Story of the Shoe	63
Her Mission	67
A Child's Fancy	68
Bonnie's Prayer	70

PAGE

To a Little Son 71
Rosalie 74
Babyhood 75
A Common Lot 76
Paying their Way 79
The First Gray Hair 81
The Happiest Time 82
Stepping Heavenward . . . 87
Three Days 88
A Little Sin 90
What To Be 92
Roses and Thorns 93
Abide With Me 94
On Easter Morn, ... 95
Face to Face with my Saviour . . 96
No Day Without Its Deed . . . 98
"It Doth Not Yet Appear" . . 99
Loved and Lost 101
Faith Never Worries 102
Bells at Evening Time . . . 105
A Wish 106
A Thought 107
The Easter Lily's Mission . . . 108
The Upward Way 110
God's Will To Me 112

Life and Song

As they dwelt with the Poet.

"I would that Life and Song,
Might each express the whole of each."
Sidney Lanier.

CHILDHOOD

TWINS were they—Life and Song,
Born together,
In fair weather,
When the days were long.
Stepping lightly, hand in hand,
Forth they went in Wonderland.

Song began her rippling cooing,
When Life's eyes,
In glad surprise,
Shone on all the great world's doing,
"Love and wonder, joy and play,"
That was all sweet Song could say.

In the sunny vale of childhood,
Played they long,
Life and Song.
Plucking flowers from bosky wildwood,
Playmates of the bird and bee,
Murmuring brook and rustling tree.

"Come," called Life; cried Song, "I folow,
We will go,
Soft as snow,
Down through many a fragrant hollow,
Where the vagrant wild flowers sweet;
Spring to meet our springing feet."

Life was full of all fair motion,
Past the reach
Of prosy speech;
Like a wavelet of the ocean.
Full of grace, till (none could doubt it),
Only Song could tell about it.

Tell in silver notes whose measures,
Ever rhyming,
Ever chiming,
Seemed the drippings of pure pleasures;
Like the sprinkling, tinkling tune,
Of a bobolink in June.

Only Song could chant the story
Of glad plays,
And sunny days;
Of wild rose and morning glory;
Brooks that ripple, rains that sprinkle,
Buds that blossom, stars that twinkle.

Only Song could tell the praises
New and sweet,
Though incomplete,
Of the violets and the daisies,

Where they wandered hand in hand,
Through enchanted fairyland.

Only Song could fitly render,
All the kisses,
All the blisses
Mother love gave, sweet and tender;
Clearest tunes with sweetest words,
Played on Life's awakening chords.

Twins were they, but did not know it,
Never thinking,
Ever drinking;
Grateful? Scarce enough to show it;
Of the bubbling wine of pleasure,
Brimming o'er Life's amplest measure.

Thus it was that they went straying,
Glad and long,
Life and Song,
In the spring of childhood Maying,
Joy's deep riddle, Life had guessed it,
Claimed it, and sweet Song expressed it.

YOUTH

Life had left the tiny valley,
Where the brook
Its dimples took
On with many a laughing sally.
Life had climbed the upland slope,
Led by Youth and winged by Hope.

"Sweet, sweet Song, come follow after,"
Called she long.
"Come, dear Song."
"Tune and rhyme and smile and laughter,
All I need to tell the truth
Of the sunny land of Youth."

So came Song and walked beside her,
On the height,
All was bright.
Lovely Life, ah, who could chide her?
Care and wisdom could not reach her,
Only Love and Song could teach her.

Whispered Life, with sweet insistence,
"Sing full strong,
Dearest Song,
Of the keynote of existence.
It is pure, without alloy,
I have found it, it is Joy."

Song then wrought a lyre in fashion
Graceful, olden,
Gleaming, golden,
Smote the trembling chords of passion;
Till the notes of deep desire,
Upward rose like sparks of fire.

"Azure skies," sang Song, "are o'er us,
In the bushes,
Larks and thrushes
Join to swell a wordless chorus."

"Sing, sweet Song," said Life, "sing sweeter,
We will travel faster, fleeter."

Sang then Song, "On distant ocean,
I can see,
Fair and free;
Stately ships with graceful motion,
And they sail, they sail in truth,
For the sparkling shores of youth.

"Spicy gales are gently blowing;
Soft and bland,
Toward the land,
Rarest perfume round thee throwing,
All fair riches are for thee,
When thy ship comes in from sea.

"Where those roseate clouds are gleaning,
Vast and fair,
Through the air;
I can see a castle gleaming,
Love, the King, doth hold the key,
And he waits, dear Life for thee."

"Song," said Life, "thy voice doth hover,
Glide and roll,
Above my soul,
Thou art dearer than a lover.
I would have thy rapture fill me,
Speak each bliss that e'er shall thrill me."

"Life," said Song, "if I delight thee,
Every day,
Blithe and gay;
Let no harsh words e'er affright me.
Keep thyself in purity,
As the twin of Poesy."

Thus they spoke to one another,
Oft and long,
Life and Song;
Walking close as friend and brother.
Heart to heart, for aye revealing,
Each the others deepest feeling.

MANHOOD

Far upon the sunlit mountain,
Grandly bright,
In its height;
Far above the plash of fountain;
Where the light was clear and strong,
Walked together Life and Song.

Spake then Life, " 'Twas toilsome climbing;
Dusty highway,
With no by-way.
If you kept some sweet notes chiming,
Bells of fame and wealth were ringing,
Till I scarcely heard your singing.

"See how far it lies below us;
Youth's fair vale;

In the dale;
Sweetest spot that earth can show us.
I—that hurried on so fast,
Knew not when its bounds I passed."

Sang then Song, "It had illusions,
Yet 'twas fair,
Free from care;
Gay with Fancy's rich effusions,
Still I see its colors blending,
Breathe its incense sweet ascending.

"Fame hath thrown a garland round thee,
Jewels bright
As the light,
Honor's liberal hand hath crowned thee,
Glossy are thy laurel leaves;
Golden are thy harvest sheaves.

"Yet," said Life, "the flowers that dally
At my feet
Are not so sweet
As the violets in the valley,
And thy voice is not so clear,
In this rarer atmosphere."

Darkly rose a cloud before them,
Black as night;
Hid the light.
Threw its ebon shadow o'er them,
Somber cloud of woe and sorrow;
Doomed to shade each coming morrow.

Life sat down in deep despair,
Sad his cry,
"Fool was I
Deeming skies were always fair,"
Song in darkness, drawing near him,
Breathed one plaintive note to cheer him.

"Nay," cried Life, "we part forever,
Dearest Song,
Loved so long.
I can bear your voice, no, never.
Sorrow's hand is o'er my eyes;
All my path in darkness lies."

But sweet Song was not dismayed
Sought for power
Every hour,
To uplift the heavy shade
Laid on Life by darksome grief,
Sought for words to bring relief.

So she sang in cadence tender,
Sad and low,
Soft and slow,
Sympathy indeed to render.
Soothing teardrops fell and glistened,
Till Life raised his head and listened.

Then she sang in words of beauty,
Truer, clearer,
Stronger, nearer,
Sang of faith and work and duty;

Sang of Heaven's own fadeless morrow,
That shall lift the night of sorrow.

"Song," said Life, "come close beside me,
Thou art mine,
I am thine.
Teach me patience, never chide me.
We will walk, through changing weather,
Down the sunset slope together."

AGE

Came the time of winter weather,
Clouds were drifting,
Snows were sifting.
Life and Song sat down together;
Raked the coals of dull desire,
Fanned and coaxed the dying fire.

Strangers deemed they were mismated,
(Song they say,
Was made for May),
It should fly, nor thus be fated,
To embrace a darkening ember,
In the air of bleak December.

Youth (they said) was fair and rosy,
Mate of Song,
All day long.
Age was withered, age was prosy,
Yet they piled their driftwood higher,
Built of broken spars their fire.

"Song," said Life, "thy strains so tender
Tell but part,
Of my heart.
Thou hast only learned to render
Faintest echo of its gladness,
Surface fathom of its sadness.

Still I long to hear thee singing,
All thy rhyming,
All thy chiming,
Keeps my spirit Heavenward winging.
Thou hast been the soul of me,
Heaven born, deathless Poesy.

"Sing to me in cadence pleasant,
Like the swell
Of vesper bell.
I have little in the present,
Sing of hearts that aye are haunted,
By the ghosts of days enchanted."

So the notes of Song went ringing,
Sweet and fair,
Through the air,
Zenith and horizon winging;
Till all time became a part
Of the poet and his heart.

And the world that paused and listened,
Oft and long,
To the song,
Said through tears that softly glistened;

"Life and Song will ope the portal
Of the land of love immortal."

Still the raptured tones went swelling,
Notes of glory
In their story;
"Earth," cried Song, "is not my dwelling;
Life, together we will fly,
To our native home on high."

So they found the poet dead,
Smile of grace,
On his face.
And the ones who loved him said,
"Life and Song are his together
Twins in Heaven's unclouded weather."

Blossoms

WHEN first the springtime's fair array,
In Northern lands I saw around me,
An apple tree, a great bouquet,
With showers of blushing petals crowned me.
I shook them lightly from my brow;
"Your charms," I said, "can never please me,
Weary with winter's cold and snow,
No Northern pleasures can appease me.

"I hardly see, I cannot prize
The beauty which each bloom discloses,
For, oh, my heart is all in love
With orange flowers and Southern roses.
Yet more, methinks I cannot find
Room in my heart for Northern faces,
So closely are its tendrils twined
Round far off friends with Southern graces."

Successive years 'neath Northern skies,
Far absent from my native bowers;
Have weakened not those blessed ties
That bind me to the land of flowers.
Yet am I changed. When blossoms fall,
I greet them with as true a blessing,
As those which crowned me at the call
Of coaxing South winds soft caressing.

My stubborn heart has larger grown,
And has a thousand sacred places
Where love shall evermore enthrone
Most fondly cherished Northern faces;
With earnest love I gladly clasp
The palms where Northern firmness lingers,
But reach my other hand to grasp
The precious warmth of Southern fingers.

The songs I sing shall breathe a strain
In praise of Northern vales and mountains,
But evermore the glad refrain
Shall be of Southern palms and fountains,
And for the flowers I love the most,
Their beauty in my heart enshrining,
With apple blossoms of the North
Shall Southern orange blooms be twining.

Garner the Beautiful

GARNER the beautiful as you go,
Wait not for a day of leisure,
The hours of toil may be long and slow,
And the moments few of pleasure;
But beauty strays by the common ways,
And calls to the dullest being;
Then let not thine ear be deaf to hear,
Or thine eye be slow in seeing.

Kind Nature calls from her varied halls,
"I will give you balm for sadness,"
Let the sunset's gleam and the laugh of the stream,
Awaken thoughts of gladness.
If a bird should pour his song by thy door
Let thy heart respond with singing;
The winds and the trees have harmonies,
That may set thy joy bells ringing.

Pause oft by a flower in its leafy bower,
And feast thine eye on its beauty,
A Queen hath bliss no rarer than this,
'Tis thy privilege and duty,
And, oh, when the shout of a child rings out,
And its face is bright with gladness,
Let it kindle the shine of joy in thine,
And banish doubt and sadness.

Then gather the beautiful by your way,
It was made for the soul's adorning,
'Tis a darksome path which no radiance hath,
At noon, at night, in the morning.
Hard is the soil where we delve and toil
In the homely field of duty,
But the hand of our King to us doth fling,
The shining flowers of beauty.

Flowers by the Wayside

HOW glad am I that not alone in gardens;
Close walled and guarded, lovely flowers bloom;
But along the roadside lift they radiant faces,
Offering to each passer beauty and perfume

And I often seek them, leaving richest roses,
Fair stately lilies, pinks and tulips gay;
Glad to find the treasures Nature's hand discloses
Bright and blithesome darlings, flowers by the way.

Mother Nature tends them, sows their seed and trains them,
Twines the trumpet flower upon the fences old;
Leads the morning glory o'er the rock wall hoary,
Bids the fragrant primrose lift her cup of gold.

Calls the willow catkins in the earliest spring-time,
Tells the dandelion to star with gold the sod,
Waves the purple asters in the autumn sunshine,
Teaches grace and lightness to the goldenrod.

Scatters honeyed clover thick amid the grasses,
Wreathes the blackberry blossom, tints the violet shy;
Saves a place for milkweed and yarrow as she passes,
Clusters starry daisies, looking toward the sky.

And I often liken these glad flowers, uncultured,
To the vagrant poems, scattered here and there;
Seedlings from some free heart, touched by sun and shower,
Springing up unbeckoned, seeking light and air.

Fain would I behold them, gathered in a garland,
With the hues and odors of the seasons gay;
Fragrant, unpretending, living, giving, blending,
Nature's happy children, flowers by the way.

An Idyl of Spring

THE sovereign year hath daughters dear,
Twelve maidens, sad and merry;
Fair red-lipped June with voice a tune
And pallid January.

December old, with aspect cold,
July, dark-eyed and lazy;
September with her hair of gold,
And March, but March is crazy.

November is a nut-brown maid,
October, beauteous, merry,
August, dull maid, dreams in the shade,
And cross is January.

One sunny morn was April born,
The wind had just stopped blowing;
And soft and clear to please her ear,
A brook began its flowing.

Glad April smiled, fair, radiant child,
And all the world grew sunny,
"Ha, ha, my dear," exclaimed the year,
"I am glad you are blithe and bonny."

But when she knew, though skies were blue,
That grass and flowers were sleeping;

She hid her face with childish grace,
And drowned her smiles in weeping.

But, lo, the birds, with sweetest words,
Came singing love and praises,
And from the earth, to greet her birth,
Sprang violets and daisies.

Then April, O the changeful maid,
Would laugh for very pleasure,
Till Earth's great voice would cry "Rejoice"
We've riches beyond measure.

And then for joy which seemed to cloy,
Her happy eyes ran over;
"Let grief be dead," the stern Year said,
"With Happiness your lover."

But still she wept and still she smiled,
While leaves and breezes kissed her,
Waxed wroth the Year, "you wayward dear,
I'll call your fairer sister.

"Come forth this day, my charming May,
For you shall bloom the posies;
I'll crown you dear, best child of Year
And wreathe your brow with roses."

Sweet April fled, but bent her head,
In homage to her sister,
And threw the while, a sunny smile,
To rosy May, and kissed her.

Fancies

I BUILT a bridge of fancies,
When I was young and gay,
Of smiles and songs and dances,
And flowerets of the May,
With sparkling dewdrops gleaming,
With every beauty rife;
It seemed to my fond dreaming,
To span the stream of life.

I wove a web of fancies,
When youth and joy were mine,
The roses of romances,
Made gay the fair design.
I sang a song of pleasure,
At what I deemed would be
The riches of the measure
The fates would fill for me.

My glittering bridge of fancies,
Went down beneath a storm;
The web of fair romances
Has never decked my form.
But song shall still aspire,
To duty, love and truth,
And bear my spirit higher
Than all the dreams of youth.

A Picture

RED, red o'er the quaint little doorway,
The blossoming roses fall;
And flecked are the sands of the pathway
By the shadows of lilies tall,
A cottage neath boughs of apple,
And framed in the foreground fair,
A mother with dimpled baby,
Like a blossom and bud most rare.

The flush of the sunset lingers
O'er the picture, tender, complete;
There are smiles and fluttering fingers,
There are cooings and whisperings sweet.
They wait for coming footsteps;
'Tis a scene to well repay
The happy husband and father,
For the toils of the working day.

I pause by the leafy lilac,
Charmed by the spell which lies
In the sweetest, fairest picture
Which ever has blessed my eyes.
Why do I wail and linger,
When eager my steps should be?
It is in another man's garden,
Ah me, ah me, ah me.

Balanced

IT WAS Saturday evening, toil weary,
I traversed the long, dusty street,
With a bundle of work and a baby,
And a little one close at my feet.

We were passing the homes of the wealthy,
I deemed them the dwellings of pride,
And the thought of our hardships and labor,
Rushed over my soul like a tide.

Near the door of a mansion most stately,
Whose porches were blossoming bowers;
Was a lady, herself like a lily,
And her labor was—gathering flowers.

"For her are the roses," I murmured,
"But briars our doorway should crown;"
And I shook off the hand of the prattler,
Who was eagerly pulling my gown.

"Oh, Mamma, do wait dust a moment,
Ose bootiful flowers to see,
How I wish at most loveliest lady,
Would div dust one blossom to me."

She heard it, she came down the pathway,
With a look that was almost divine;
She placed her sweet clusters of roses,
In the hands of those wee ones of mine.

I murmured my thanks, "but such flowers
Were too fine for the humble and poor,"
Then she spoke, and her fair face was sadder
Than I ever had looked on before.

"You are rich with such beautiful children,
Best treasures our God ever gave;
I was plucking these poor little flowers,
To put on my little one's grave."

Oh then how my envy was silenced;
To pity and thankfulness turned;
For her were the briars, while roses
Seemed crowding the path I had spurned.

Thus oft by a showy external,
We mete out our love and our hate;
Forgetting that justice eternal
Is holdig the balace of Fate.

Voices of the Tides

TWO friends, one happy golden time,
Were wandering on a far off shore;
Where falling waves in cadence chime,
And rising tides like thunders roar.

They watched the gleaming waters blend:
They caught the music of the sea:
And spake the eldest, "Tell me, friend,
What words the waters speak to thee.

"Which hath the power to stir your soul;
The ebbing wavelets chanting low;
Or sounding billows mighty roll,
When rising tides resistless flow?

"They have a music which I love,
These rising waters of the sea;
The waves beneath and winds above,
A mystic language speaks to me.

"Full oft my tide of hope seems low,
So coldly gleam the sands of care;
So darkly loom the rocks of woe,
My spirit yields to dull despair.

"Each crested billow rising high,
And battling with this rocky shore,
And mounting upward to the sky,
With voice of gladness ever more.

"Inspires my soul with courage true,
And for life's battle makes me strong;
My heart and hands their work renew,
And 'victory' is their labor song.

"As ships come in with rising tide,
With treasures from beyond the sea;
Hope breathes of blessings rich and wide,
Some tide of fate may bring to me.

"O rising waves, come bravely in,
I hail you, proud and conquering sea;
The cheering message which you bring,
Is Nature's dearest voice to me."

"O honored friend, I gladly hear,
Your earnest words," the other spake,
"And love the words of hope and cheer,
Which Nature's searchers all may take.

"That fancy must be dim and low,
Which does not in her works rejoice;
And dull the ear which does not know
That God doth speak through Nature's voice.

"Each heart may find a message true,
To crown its joy, or calm its fear.
The words these waters speak to you,
Are not the same as those I hear.

"My life is bright, I do not need
A rising tide to strengthen me;
My joys outrun their eager speed,
With braver song than sings the sea.

"I seek the calmness of that hour,
When waves are low upon the strand;
That quiet thoughts may have the power,
My restless spirit to command.

"Each tiny wave, each crown of spray;
The tinted shell that softly sings,
Create, methinks, in sweetest way,
A worthy love of humble things.

"My hands, long filled with worldly pelf,
Release their hold of sordid toys,
My heart forgets its love of self,
And thrills with higher, gentler joys.

"As ships sail out with falling tide,
With precious freight from far off strands;
In hope and love I wander wide;
With those who dwell in distant lands.

"O falling tide, your gentle voice,
In words of wisdom speaks to me;
And lessons which my soul rejoice,
I learn from thee, O murmering sea.

"One noble thought we'll cherish well,
With love for letters and for art;
Some wiser things than books can tell,
Are wispered to each human heart."

California Roses

ACROSS the hill the wind blew shrill,
And smote the frozen river;
My garden bowers, devoid of flowers,
Neath icy mail did shiver,
It seemed so long since flower or song
'Twas ours to inherit,
A gloomy pall hung over all
And chilled the bravest spirit.

A message bland from far-off land,
A land with sunshine teeming,
A paper cold, but in its fold—
Could tired eyes be dreaming?
Great petals blush, like sunset's flush,
Each silken fold encloses
A perfume rare as Heaven's own air,
Pink California roses!

Though winds that blow are thick with snow,
My perished pets entombing,
Somewhere, somewhere, the skies are fair,
And fragrant flowers are blooming;
The clouds of gray seem rolled away,
And Fancy's power discloses
The groves of green we ne'er have seen,
A land of feasts of roses!

Queens of a giant race of flowers,
Ye mock us, sweet new comers,
Compared with thine, what beauties shine
To deck our eastern summers?
A glimpse is ours of those rich bowers,
The land of sun discloses,
While Memory holds, within its folds
Those California roses.

West Virginia at the Columbian Exposition

WEST VIRGINIA! Land of forests, land of rippling streams and mountains,
She who cherishes the motto "Mountaineers are always free,"
Comes with heart as pure and crystal as her own glad flashing fountains,
To present her regal offerings at the World's great jubilee.

For she heard Columbia's voice to her dutous children calling
"Come, my loyal sons and daughters, with your garnered treasures rare;"
And she hastened from her mountains where the tinkling streams are falling,
In the gathering of the nations and her sister states to share.

She is crowned with mighty forests, where the
century's forces slumber
She is ribbed with richest mineral, and her
veins are full of oil,
She has smiling fields of plenty, and her fruits
she may not number,
She has health for those who languish, she
has wealth for those who toil.

But she would not guage her merits by her
rich material treasure,
'Tis a time when truth and honor call for
loftier, better store,
To her noble sons and daughters does she point
with proudest pleasure;
While a heart that throbs with rapture
swells within her bosom's core.

Then she turns her to the Southland, and she
says, "you are my mother,
We can never be divided in our hours of
weal and woe,"
Then she says unto the Northland, "Clasp my
hand, you are my brother,
And in bands of love united we will ever
onward go.

She would walk the path of progress, led by
truth and right and duty,
To her God and to her conscience ever loyal,
ever true;

She would enter realms of science, find new
fields of use and beauty,
Ever marching 'neath the banner of the red,
the white, the blue.

When the great Republic's children throng in
loving homage round her,
And pour their lordly treasures in her hands
and at her feet,
When with garlands full of beauty they with
joyful hands have crowned her,
Where magnolia, rose and poppy with the
passion flower meet.

When upon her brow a blossom flushes like the
sunset's splendor;
And you deem it adds new lustre to a face
where glory thrills,
Some old mountaineer will whisper in a voice
proud and tender,
"'Tis a spray of mountain laurel from our
West Virginia hills!"

First Settlers of Williamstown

Written for Williamstown (W. Va.) Historical Society.

LET us gather our thoughts from the scenes around us,
The pleasures and cares that are ours today,
And escaped from the chains that have closely bound us,
Go back to the past that is far away.

From the onward rush of a civilization,
Whose days are as full as the ancient years,
We would turn to the youth of our glorious nation,
And live in the lives of the pioneers.

We would see the unbroken forests swelling,
In the vale which our clustered homes adorn,
And mark the rise of the first rude dwelling,
And the first fair harvest of golden corn.

Before our starry flag "Old Glory,"
Had ever unfurled its stripes to the sun,
When we had no place in the Nation's story,
And unknown was the name of Washington.

Before the Liberty Bell had wakened
In patriot hearts a responsive tone,
And our tribute money was closely reckoned
By George the Third on the English throne

Where Grave Creek enters the broad Ohio,
In seventeen hundred and seventy-one,
Were two pioneers, bound for unsettled regions,
Joseph and Samuel Tomlinson.

A bracing of heart for unknown dangers,
A farewell to friends who were firm, though few,
And the brothers were off on their perilous voyage,
With their meager stores in a little canoe.

Down, down the flood of the mighty river,
The noble, majestic Ohio,
O'er waves that ripple and flash and quiver,
They journeyed on in the long ago.

Never a smoke from a friendly chimney
Rose neath the blue of the arching sky,
Nor low of cattle, nor bell from steeple,
Fell on the ear as they floated by.

Perchance the scream of the startled eagle,
Broke on the air as he soared in flight;
Perchance the bark of the wolf or panther,
Smote the gloom of the silent night.

Perchance the red deer paused to watch them,
Bending down to the stream to drink,
Perchance the black bear viewed their passage,
From bluff that frowned o'er the river's brink.

But Heaven was kind and no red-skinned warrior
Sent them an arrow from bison thong,
But favoring skies and waves and breezes,
Marked where the pale face passed along.

Down to the brink of the swelling river,
Crowded the lofty forest trees,
Green with the leaves of the early springtime,
Murmuring soft in the Southern breeze.

Fair as a dream were the hills and valleys
Of the wondrous, beauteous virgin land;
And curving islands fringed with willows,
Like emerald stones in a silver band.

At last where the waves of the swift Muskingum,
Lose themselves in Ohio's tide,
They found the spot which their hearts had chosen,
And moored their bark on Virginia's side.

And now, (for this was their second voyage),
They sought and found, not far from the shore

A mighty beech with a name engraven,
S. T. They had marked it the year before.

And soon through the woods awoke an echo,
Never before in their denseness heard;
Undisturbed save by whoop of savage,
Or growl of beast, or the song of bird.

The strokes of the ax rang clear and steady,
And, sight unseen through the ages before,
First home of the valley, a white man's dwelling,
A settler's cabin arose on the shore.

A clearing was made, and soil was broken,
And soon there dawned the eventful morn,
When the hand of the white man sowed in the valley,
First fruit of the ages, a crop of corn.

Deem you they recked at their humble labor,
What destinies they were shaping then?
Forerunner of a thousand harvests,
To gladden the lives of a million men.

Brothers were these of Rebecca Williams,
Wife of Isaac of future renown,
And this was the land that these brothers gave her,
Fair site of the village of Williamstown.

Of what did they think when their labor over,
They sat at their door in the evening still,
And watched the sunset adown the river,
Or the trees on the nameless Harmar Hill?

Did they long for the rise of a mighty nation,
Of English speech, but from England free,
The refuge of those of every station,
Whose hope was plenty and liberty?

Did they muse of happy homes in the valley
Of orchards rich on the steep hillside;
Of mill and market, and school and temple,
And fleets of coal on the river wide?

Did they foresee the rise of a noble city,
To gain in honors as years advance,
And wear as a dower, through pride and power,
The name of the hapless Queen of France.*

Perhaps they dreamed of rustling cornfields,
Of acres with golden wheat a-gleam,
But caught not the sound of the rattling reaper,
Or threshing machines that are run by steam.

We can but wish there had come before them,
Like faint mirage o'er the waters clear;
Or a spell from enchanter's wand cast o'er them,
A lighted steamboat drawing near.

*Marietta, Ohio.

We can but wish they had dimly reckoned,
Of an iron horse propelled by fire,
Or fancied distant realms that beckoned,
And answered and heard by electric wire.

But unguessed by them were the strides of science,
Unseen the discoveries of coming men,
And the history fair of the noble valley,
Their opening labors were christening then.

They could not deem that a future hour,
Their humble work would with honor crown,
And their name be treasured as sacred dower,
A century later in Williamstown.

While we enjoy the busy present,
Crowded and crowned through the circling years,
Back we turn to the days that have vanished,
Honor and praise for the pioneers.

And while homes and harvests smile in the valley
And the river flows toward the setting sun,
Shall the tale be told of the first white settlers,
Joseph and Samuel Tomlinson.

And their names shall go down through coming ages,
To the children of children yet unborn,
White dwellers—the first of this noble valley
First home and first harvest of golden corn.

At the Graves of Isaac and Rebecca Williams

Williamstown, W. V., Nov. 18th, 1896.

THE flush of a rosy sunset,
Burns where the low west clears,
As I stand in the autumn evening,
By the graves of the pioneers.

The gleaming, broad Ohio,
By the sun's last rays is kissed,
And the brown woods on the hillside
Are veiled in purple mist.

Slowly the shadows lengthen,
And twilight settles down,
O'er storied Marietta,
And quiet Williamstown.

And here, obscure, unnoted,
For nearly seventy years,
Have slept these dauntless partners,
The early pioneers.

Rebecca and Isaac Williams,
Drusilla, their daughter dear
First white child of this region;
First wedded couple here.

They looked from their humble cabin
On wild unbroken ground;
And in the redskinned warrior
A wily neighbor found.

'Twas theirs with joy to welcome
Ohio's earliest band;
And share their garnered harvest
With free, unstinted hand.

Isaac, the hunter, woodsman,
The scout and spy most leal;
Rebecca skilled in healing,
And deft at the spinning wheel.

Their bold adventures over,
Their life of hardy toil;
Amid the scenes they cherished,
They rest in chosen soil.

Sleep well, oh brave and loyal,
Beneath your native sky;
While changes mark your valley,
And men are born and die.

A record that ye thought not,
Is yours through coming years;
An honor that ye sought not,
Sleep well, oh pioneers.

Relic Day

RELICS of the long ago,
How we gathered them together,
Searching attics dim and low,
In the stormy, eerie weather.
Relics of the early years,
Of the hardy pioneers;
Of the long ago.

Reel that never whirls and clacks,
Spinning wheels that never hum,
Hackles for the broken flax,
Clocks whose works are long since dumb.
Woolen hose and buckskin slippers,
Longnecked gourds they used as dippers,
In the long ago.

Snuff-box, pipe, and powder horn,
Dogskin shot-pouch, flint lock rusty;
Mortar made for pounding corn,
Hunting shirt, moth-eaten, musty,
Demijohn for home-made whisky,
Some old pioneers got frisky
In the long ago.

Old andirons that lustre lack,
Pewter plates all dull and battered;
Kettles huge and gridirons black,
Big stone pitcher, glassware shattered.

Odd blue dishes, English make,
Board for baking johnny cake;
Good, so long ago.

Woolen coverlids so gay,
Knitting yarn and needles rusty;
Chests where homespun linen lay,
Candle moulds and snuffers dusty,
Patchwork quilts that made a show,
In the long ago.

Letters yellow, dim with age,
Words of grave advice and duty,
Prim precision marks each page,
Knew they romance, loved they beauty?
Folded with a poem rare
Lo, a tress of shining hair,—
Oh, the long ago.

Quilted skirts and gowns of crepe,
Samplers worked with tints so mellow;
Baby caps of quaintest shape,
Leghorn bonnets old and yellow,
Oh, they look so melancholy,
Did they shadow faces jolly,
In the long ago.

Hoard them up, though useless, old,
Talk of all those hardships often,
Let their memories be as gold;
They who toiled our lot to soften,
Cherish, aye, through all the years,
Memories of the pioneers,
Of the long ago.

What the Primrose Told

THE Primrose whispered a secret to me,
As we met in a dusty lane;
But not understanding, I made quite free
To ask her to tell it again.

Then she said, "Why, Violet, Mint and Clover,
And Goldenrod so gay,
Have told you the same thing over and over,
Many and many a day."

"But tell me again, I do not know;"
So she said with a shining face,
"A sweet and a pleasant thing may grow,
In a very barren place."

The Painter and Poet

THE artist stood in the doorway
Of a gallery wide and grand;
Where the fairest picture on the wall
Was the work of his cunning hand.

He heard the rapturous murmur,
As the gazing throng passed by;
And caught the gleam of pleasure keen,
That shone in each kindling eye.

"For this," he thought, "have I waited,
And filled is my measure of pride;
But would I that with my labor,
My heart was satisfied.

"Dim are the hues of my canvas,
And its colors seem not fair,
Compared with the glow of the sunset,
I sought to fasten there.

"And though, as reward for my effort,
The world's applause is hailed,
My own heart sits in judgment
On my work, with the verdict,—failed."

The poet sat in the sunset,
When the songs of his life had been sung,
And he heard their thrilling music,
Re-echoed from tongue to tongue.

He knew that from church and cradle,
By hearthstone and in mart,
His countrymen, loved and loving,
Where singing the songs of his heart.

And he sighed amid his smiling,
"Ah, would they could only reach
The thoughts that stirred my spirit,
Ere they prisoned themselves in speech.

"But I could not frame a measure,
So melodious, true and strong,
It could hold the joy and pleasure
That flooded my soul with song.

"And from language I could not borrow,
Words of so solemn a roll;
They could figure the waves of sorrow,
That have swept across my soul."

And amid the sound of praises,
That like incense rose and fell;
He cried."my soul is a secret,
I tried, but I could not tell."

Spain

WITH eyes that gaze into immensity,
The tigress nation sits beside the sea.
Dreamy is she, and yet she does not sleep.
Black memories in her heart forever creep,
Of woe and greed, and tortures dark and dire,
The Inquisition's dungeon, rack and fire,
Through the soft air that breathes of romance blest,
She hears the cry of conscience long suppressed.
She heeds not; she whose day of joy and feast
Is that which sees the death of man and beast.
Cruel is she, and glories to retain
The greed of power, and the greed of gain,
Sore twitchings fret her at the thought of one
Who brought her honor—Italy's great son
Columbus! Honored name while time remains,
Yet loaded by her hand with galling chains:
Yea, deepest of the thorns that vex her soul,
Is thought of that great region lost to her control.
What memories stir her of her dreams of old;
Boundless dominions, subjects, power, gold.
In retrospect she sees bold Cortez' band
Spread desolation through the Aztec land;

While Coronado scours the Western plains,
And plants her banners o'er its wide domains:
And Ponce de Leon finds the land, forsooth,
Where springs the fabled fount of endless
youth.
How stirred her cruel heart with joy untold,
At dark Pizzarro's stores of bloodstained gold.
What empires lay within her grasping hand!
Yet all have slipped away like ropes of sand.
To her, of that unrivaled, fair domain,
But two small islands as her own remain.
She hears a voice that calls across the sea,
It is a people's cry for liberty
Like Pharaoh of old, relentless, slow,
She answeres back, "I will not let you go."
Silent, yet deeply mooved, the nations stand,
Waiting the loosing of that cruel hand,
Waiting till Cuba breaks her iron chain,
And the new world at last is free from Spain.
January 1897.

Americans All

HARK, mid the clangor of war's alarms,
A nation is calling her sons to arms.
A mighty nation, whose boundary strands,
Are Atlantic's shores, and Pacific's sands,
In the sunny South, in the frozen North,
They are hearing her call, "my sons, come forth."
"Aye, aye," They answer that ringing call,
"Brothers are we, Americans all."

She can hear the tramp of their marching feet;
From the lonely plain and the city's street.
Merchant, mechanic, and student and seer!
Farmer and hunter and mountaineer.
World worn manhood, and youth and health;
Empty handed, or blest with wealth;
They march, and they answer their country's call
"Brothers are we, Americans all."

"Hail, who are ye with step so true?"
"We are the men who have worn the blue,"
"And you, with the martial air today?"
"We are the men who have worn the gray.

Foemen once, but our battles past,
We stand 'neath one glorious flag at last;
We join our hands at Liberty's call,
Brothers are we, Americans all."

Valiant and varied the coharts that come;
Men of trade from the city's hum,
Sons of adoption from over the main:
Cowboys bold from the Western plain.
Swarthy blacks, whose fathers were slaves,
And Freedom's own children, the redskinned braves
They fall into ranks at Columbia's call,
A nation united, Americans all.

Honor and cheers for the brave and the true,
Smiles and tears for the heroes in blue,
Not for glory and not for gain;
Do they come from the city, the farm and the plain,
But every arm that is raised to smite,
Will strike for Freedom and Truth and Right,
For they march, they march at Humanity's call,
Brothers and comrades, Americans all.

Raising the American Flag

At Santiago de Cuba: July 17th, 1898.

NOON in a tropical country,
And a blazing sun looks down;
On the waving palms of the mountains,
And the red roofs of the town.

On the walls of Morro Castle;
And the battle ships that lay;
Grim guards of the land locked harbor,
Of Santiago bay.

And high in the fleckless sunshine,
To be seen from the land and the main,
Floats a red and yellow banner,
The flag of haughty Spain.

Floats as it aye has floated,
Whenever a breeze could blow,
Since Columbus raised its standard,
Four hundred years ago.

Dawned has the day of its furling,
Emblem of tyranny,
Room, room for a broader banner,
The flag of liberty.

Slowly its brave defenders
Their cherished arms lay down;
Steady the tramp of their victors,
In the streets of the ancient town.

Ten thousand hearts beat faster,
And silence falls like a swoon,
As the bell from the old Cathedral,
Chimes out the hour of noon.

Slowly down from the azure,
The yellow and red is curled,
Quick, quick to the leaping breezes,
Are the Stars and Stripes unfurled.

From the lips of the waiting thousands,
Springs one exultant cheer;
As the sound of martial music
Salutes each listening ear.

"Tis the Star Spangled Banner, oh, long may it wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Float high o'er the sea-girt island,
Flag of the brave and the free,
Till its people learn the meaning,
Of right and liberty.

Then down from its lofty standard,
Let thy gleaming folds be furled,
That the flag of a newborn nation,
May greet the gazing world.

And the lone star of Cuba in triumph shall
wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of
the brave.

The Flag of Spain

OH, the flag of Spain, that ruled the main
Through centuries marked in story;
Explorers grave and pirates brave
Flocked under its folds for glory.
Columbus bore that flag to our shore,
To be furled or humbled, never;
Is it true that its folds shall float no more
O'er the western world forever?

Oh, the flag of Spain, o'er Mexico,
It waved at Cortez's pleasure,
When he brought the gentle Aztecs low,
And razed their land for treasure,
O'er fair Peru its colors flew;
Pizarro's cruel token;
When tortures bold brought Indian gold,
And Inca's hearts were broken.

Oh, the flag of Spain, through loss and gain,
With shame has been mixed its glory;
But its triumphs long will live in song;
And are part of Columbia's story,

Above Balboa's dauntless band,
It waved with graceful motion,
When their wondering eyes, with glad surprise,
Saw the Pacific ocean.

Oh, the flag of Spain, let none complain,
That its red and gold bars shiver,
O'er the castles proud of the old Grandees,
On the banks of the Guadlaquiver,
But its reign o'er the western world is o'er,
We shall call it back, no, never,
It's bars are furled to the young new world,
Forever and forever.

The Field of Song

FAIR, fair, neath ever radiant skies,
Watched o'er by stars with tender eyes,
Ripened by sunlight, fed by rain;
Rarest of all earth's fields of grain;
Fanned by the breeze of minstrelsy,
It lies—the field of Poesy.

It smiles it waves through countless hours,
Shut in by hedge of fragrant flowers.
Above it sounds the wild bird's note,
While o'er it sweetest breezes float:
And reapers good and glad aand strong,
Go toiling in the field of Song.

But I, my task is not to wield,
A scythe in such a heavenly field;
From stubbly hillsides all the day,
I clear the briars and stones away.
But when the pensive twilight falls,
I wander where my fancy calls,
And glean, where others passed along;
As reapers in the field of Song.

I have no blade to cut such wheat;
I tread with slow and clumsy feet.
And yet, content and glad am I
With scattered grains that shining lie,
I walk the ground which seems to me
The Eden land of earth to be.
I linger late, I tarry long;
A gleaner in the field of Song.

SONGS OF MOTHERHOOD AND HOME

Story of the Shoe

QUIET thoughts of quiet homelife in a simple little village,
How they often throng my memory as the ebbing moments flow,
Till I've almost tears for trials that have vext us and perplext us,
And an echo for our laughter in our home of long ago.

There was nothing fair about it to delight the heart or fancy
Of a poet or a painter should he chance to pass that way;
It will have no place in story, for it saw no deeds of glory,
And its history is the history of a thousand homes today.

For within this little cottage lived a Father and a Mother;
And they had so many children that they know not what to do:
And they loved them, and they whipped them, and with bread and broth they fed them,
In this humble little dwelling which they always called The Shoe.

There were children in the doorway, there were children at the windows,
And they laughed and cried and chatted, and they played and worked and grew,
And they tasted sweet and bitter from the cup of life together,
Health and sickness, pain and pleasure in the noisy little Shoe.

There were merry times at evening in the heel, the little parlor,
There were jests and plans recounted, there were stories old and new;
There were gatherings in the morning in the crowded toe, the kitchen,
There was never one too many in the cosy little Shoe.

There were many hours of laughter, of sunshine and of singing,
When Life's roses seemed to cover all the ugly thorns that grew;
There were weary days of labor, full of anxious cares and sighing,
For Poverty sat grimly as an inmate of the Shoe.

Spring wreathed her apple blossoms o'er the humble little doorway,
And autumn's fruitage mellowed neath the sunshine and the dew;

The summer roses reddened, and the winter
snowdrifts whitened,
And Time was working changes with the
people of the Shoe.

Oh, the first break in the household when the
blue-eyed laddie left it,
A seeker after Fortune amid fairer scenes and
new;
Oh, the looking after letters, and messages
and blessings,
And the hopes that circled outward from the
narrow little Shoe.

There are no locked doors when Cupid knocks
with urgent, magic fingers,
The story told so often is always sweet and
new;
And 'twas twice and thrice repeated as the
seasons came and fleeted
And lovers' footsteps lingered on the thres-
hold of the Shoe.

Sweet Love, who binds and severs, unbidden
guest, yet welcome,
How tasteless were life's meetings and its
partings but for you:
Oh, you brought some tears and sadness, when
you came with smiles and gladness,
Bridal veils and orange blossoms to the dear
old homely Shoe.

Like a brown nest in the autumn, whence the singing birds have flitted,
Stood at last the little cottage, for its inmates sought a new;
Lock the door and close the windows, it may seem to be forsaken,
But associations cluster in the vacant little Shoe.

And the children weep at evening, though the hearth fires glimmer brightly,
"What darlings, sad and cheerless in a home so nice and new?"
"Oh, 'tis pleasant and we like it, but we cannot keep from crying,
For, oh, we feel so sorry for the poor old lonely Shoe."

Hearts may bravely beat or lanquish as the march of life goes onward,
But the gentle touch of Memory will often wake anew
Sorrow for the ills that found us, joy for all the good that crowned us,
When we lived and loved together as the people of the Shoe.

What though loving hearts must sever, golden links unite them ever,
May their sunny days be many, and their cloudy days be few;

May they form a band in Heaven, when the
chains of life are riven;
God bless the flock that scattered from the
humble little Shoe.

Her Mission

SHE was only a little woman, tis true,
And hers was a common story;
She never had dreamed of a thing to do
That would lead to fame or glory.

She could not paint, she could not sing,
And she could not write a sonnet;
She had not a face to lend a grace
To a stylish love of a bonnet.

She had not wealth, or a dream of ease,
She never had travelled for pleasure;
She knew not the art to charm and please,
In the realm of social leisure.

And yet she deemed that her life was blest,
In its humble sphere of duty,
Though only those who knew her best,
Guessed half of its hidden beauty.

For hers was a genius for little things;
The realm of home to brighten;
And she scorned not the humblest work which
brings
Some force to cheer or lighten.

For comfort and order were hers to command
And the joys of life grew longer,
As childhood clung to her loving hand,
And manhood, through her, grew stronger.

And some who loved her were half afraid,
That her sphere was far too small;
But, oh, the happy home she made,
Was a great thing after all.

And when her beauteous spirit shall flee,
From its realm of loving and giving,
Her stainless monument shall be,
The lives that were blest by her living.

A Child's Fancy

MY dear little girl climbed up on my knee,
In the dusk, in the summer weather,
And as happy as two who love can be,
We quietly talked together.

We had stories of bees, of the birds and the trees,
Of the moon and the stars of even;
But the little one's thoughts went beyond all these,
And she wanted to talk of Heaven.

"Oh, Mamma, they say it is far away,
The land where there is no dying;

And I wonder so how we ever can go,
When we have no wings for flying."

"My little dear, we never should fear,
Our Father will not forsake us,
And when he doth care to have us there,
He will find some way to take us."

Then the eyes of brown looked dreamily down,
O'er the question a sage might ponder;
A little while, then there came a smile,
Which was more of delight than wonder.

"Oh, Mamma, dear, I have thought of a plan,
As good as you ever can teach me;
I'll climb on the fence just as high as I can,
And the Lord wont have far to reach me."

Perhaps I smiled at the thought of the child,
But there flashed through my heart a feeling
That its depths should be stirred by each simple word,
Such a lesson to me revealing.

How much I had dreamed of the good which it seemed
The Father might give or teach me,
And yet my feet had never been fleet
In climbing to help Him to reach me.

And the thought of the child, pure and undefiled,
Lisped out on that summer even,
Sank down like a seed in a soil which had need
Of a growth for God and Heaven.

Bonnie's Prayer

DEAR little Bonnie, four years old,
Thoughtful as child of her age could be,
Said her prayers, as her mother told,
Nightly, kneeling beside her knee.

But she said one night, this quaint little elf,
"I've a wish, my Mamma so good and true,
Let me kneel by the bedside all by myself,
And make my prayers as the big folks do."

So all were quiet as mice could be,
While Bonnie robed in her night gown white,
Stole on tiptoe and bent her knee,
All alone for her prayers that night.

Only a moment the wee head bowed,
Then the face came up with a smile most fair,
And the other children laughed aloud,
At the wondrous shortness of Bonnie's prayer.

There came a little flush of dismay,
Over the radiant face so small,
"I couldn't think of much to say,
So I said, 'Lord, keep me,' and that was all."

Papa kissed her and gravely smiled,
"That was the best of prayers, my dear,
It was all you needed to say, my child,
You could ask no more if you prayed a year."

To a Little Son

WHY camest thou hither, oh fair one, oh, dear one,
A stranger to life, to its sorrow and joy;
Did earth have a vacancy waiting thy presence?
Was there need of thy coming, my own little boy?
Oh, wee little pilgrim, beginning life's journey
Though earth is abloom, there are thorns 'mid the flowers;
But there's surely some path for thy footsteps to follow,
Or thou hadst not been sent to this strange world of ours.

Our hearts were in need of thee, dear little son,
There were chords to be stirred by a touch such as thine;
There were hopes to be wakened, and love to be won,
And thoughts to be turned to the Giver divine,

Such sweet springs of tenderness flow at thy bidding,
And selfishness pales 'neath the smiles that you give,
Now work is worth doing, and life worth the living,
Our hearts will have need of thee long as we live.

Our home was in need of thee, good little child,
And Love bade thee enter a kingdom thine own;
Thou hast filled it with pleasure and joy undefiled,
Oh, monarch with loyalest hearts for thy throne,
There was lack of the laughter thy voice did awaken
Of thy innocent beauty, thy gladness and truth,
Thou bringest the sunshine of happiness with thee,
Our home will have need of thy childhood and youth.

The world will have need of the life thou canst live,
Thy country have need of the work thou canst do;

For the good thou canst gain, and the good thou canst give
Will earth have a place and a welcome for you.
May this wee hand grow strong in the fight against sin,
The good cause of right all thy efforts engage,
Ah, wondrous the victory the feeblest may win,
The world will have need of thy manhood and age.

And Heaven will have need of that spirit of thine,
Which was formed for a dwelling more noble than this,
There are mansions prepared by the Father divine,
Thy fit habitation through ages of bliss.
Thy God will have need of thee! mystery sublime,
For good and for glory thy life He hath given;
May the labors, the longings, the sorrows of time,
Prepare thee for Him who hath made thee for Heaven.

Rosalie

JUST two years have rolled above us,
Since, to be beloved and love us;
Came she, sweet as sweet could be;
Baby Rosalie.

Like a little radiant flower,
Blooming in a wintry hour,
Such a welcome one was she,
Dainty Rosalie.

Like a little sparkling fairy
Bright with looks and motions airy,
Seems she, with her smiles and glee,
Our Rosalie.

O the love forever winging,
And the happiness upspringing;
Round the path of such as she;
Darling Rosalie.

Little barque on Life's rough river;
Sailing toward the vast forever.
What her course: ah, who may see?
Precious Rosalie.

With the hand that led her hither,
From the whence and toward the whither,
Safely dwells for such as she.
Little Rosalie.

Babyhood

BABY and I are together all day,
Wonderful baby, this wee one of mine,
Lips full of kisses, and hand full of play,
Eyes that are brighter than April sunshine.

"What will they bring her, the long coming years;
Mornings serene in the uplands of youth,
Maidenhood's happiness, womanhood's tears,
Loving and laboring, duty and truth?"

Thus muse I often, yet ever to me
Cometh a whisper which seemeth to say,
"Dream not too much of the wondrous 'To be,'
Live loving heart in the light of today."

Ah, I may see in these bonny brown eyes,
Grave lights of wisdom, and yet do I trow,
They will look ever at life with surprise,
Wondering, questioning as they do now.

What if the fingers of Honor should place
Laurel leaves bright on this beautiful brow;
Matchless to me is your babyhood's grace,
You could not be dearer than you are now.

Rock-a-bye, baby, and mother shall sing,
Softly a song that shall chime with your play,
Life may be lovely, but never can bring,
Happier times than it gives us today.

Chasing all dreams of the future away,
Kissing you softly on cheek and on brow;
Loving you just as you are today;
You can never be sweeter than you are now.

A Common Lot

'TIS a common story I have to tell,
And perhaps you will think you know her well;
The little woman who touched in me
The magical spring of sympathy.
She was not a heroine, not at all;
A farmer's wife, with a sphere so small;
Though she often dreamed of deeds sublime,
Yet she never did them, she hadn't the time.

She worked in the morning, she worked at night;
And her labors were never completed quite.
There was milking, and baking, and churning to do,
And cleaning and mending, and nursing, too.

Till the weeks seemed alike as they whirled
away,
And Sunday was never a resting day.
She heard from afar the church bells chime,
But she seldom went there, she hadn't the
time.

She was never accounted a woman of taste,
For her garments so plain, were put on in
such haste;
The vast world of books, and the wide realm
of art,
Were regions in which she had scarcely a
part.
Though the song of the birds, and the scent of
the flowers,
And the hues of the sunset in evening's soft
hours,
Would thrill all her pulses like music or
rhyme,
But she rarely watched them, she hadn't the
time.

Were the toils for her household expended in
vain?
Oh no, they loved "Mother," though poky
and plain
She had a kind heart; and they knew it full
well.
They felt she was dull, and they couldn't
quite tell

Why she sometimes was cross, and was ill at
her ease,
When some women seemed born to be pleas-
ant and please.
She loved them with love of a tropical clime,
Without its caresses, she hadn't the time.

Was it strange, ere the evening of life had
nigh,
The summons was heard, she must take time
to die.
She folded her worn hands and lifted her
prayer;
"Oh, God, I have had so much labor and
care;
I never have given Thee my thoughts as I
would,
I wished to be saintly, I longed to be good:
But the cares of this life checked each purpose
sublime,
Dear Father, forgive me, I haven't had
time."

Paying Their Way

A WONDERFUL thing is a baby,
A king in the realm of hearts;
The household judge and jury,
And master of countless arts.
But the best thing about a baby,
You may mark it any day
Is its power that has no rival,
To fairly pay its way.

Cheeks that are softer than roseleaves,
Hands that are swifter than birds;
Hair that is silken and sunny,
Coos that are sweeter than words.
Smiles do they bring to the saddest,
Sunshine and music are they;
Blessing and love do they carry,
To always pay their way.

You may talk of the works of artists
Of the treasures that wealth can buy,
Of fashion, and books, and jewels,
With their power to satisfy;
A better wealth has the household,
That is gladdened every day
By a laughing, rollicking baby,
That always pays its way.

But oh, the interruptions,
And the work that a baby will make;
And oh, the self denials,
And the time that a baby can take.
A kiss makes up for the trouble,
A smile cures all the bother;
There was never a baby that went to bed,
The least in debt to its mother.

A rest of petting when tired
A comfort when hearts are sad;
A perfect, flawless possession,
When every thing else seems bad.
And so we coddle and kiss them,
And love them all the day;
And are glad that the blessed babies
Will always pay their way.

The First Gray Hair

OUT on the porch where the sunshine
Falls soft through a leafy screen;
I stood with my tall young daughter,
My lass of sweet sixteen.
And she laughed as she said, "O, Mamma,
I hope you do not care,
For here is something funny,
I've found your first gray hair."

Strange, that so light a sentence,
Should seem like a cloud at noon;
Should jangle amid the heart strings,
Like a discord in a tune.
Strange that we have to show it,
And then be plainly told,
Before we can ever know it,
That truth—we are growing old.

But I with such fields of labor
Awaiting my willing hand,
I, who had done so little
Of the work my youth had planned;
Oh, Time, you gay deceiver,
You have caught me unaware,
And I own that I am not ready
For your gift of the first gray hair.

Glad are the skies of morning,
And the hills of toil and hope,
But pensive shadows gather,
O'er the path down the western slope.
And a cloudlet dims our sunshine,
And we feel the evening air;
When some one, kind and cruel
Points out the first gray hair.

The Happiest Time

"GRANDMOTHER, we would a question ask,
Wishing for answer true;
Which was the happiest time of life,
And the best of all, to you?"
"Well, come hither, my merry Bess,
And Laura, and brown-eyed Sue;
But first of all I would have you guess,
And then I will tell you true."

"Then here," said Bess, "you shall have my guess,
It was when you were but a child;
Gathering flowers through careless hours,
By fancies sweet beguiled.

Thoughts as fair as the morning air,
Sweet as a poet's rhyme,
I would say that Childhood's day,
Was Grandmother's happiest time."

"Nay," said Sue, "it was when as a girl
She led her class in school;
Young Ambition awake in her heart,
Success her guide and rule.
Or when as fairest of maids she stood
In beauty's loveliest prime,
I am sure it is truth that the flush of youth,
Was Grandmother's happiest time."

"And I," said Laura, "will venture to say,
That the happiest time she knew,
Was when as a maiden, fair and gay,
She found her lover true.
Soft moonlit hours in summer bowers,
Fond vows that with heart-beats chime,
Oh, the golden sway of Love's young day,
Was Grandmother's happiest time."

"Well have you guessed, my children dear,
Thus would it seem to youth,
All of the times you have named were sweet
And radiant days in truth.
Childhood's glad time, and Youth's fair prime,
And the hours of Love's young thrall,
But I had some years which I count with tears,
As the happiest time of all.

"It was when my children were little ones all,
And the work of the day was done;
I could number the heads in the snowy beds,
And kiss them, every one.
Or when from play at the close of day
They gathered around my knee;
Oh, the days when my children all were mine,
Were the happiest days to me.

"Some have wandered, and some grown cold,
And some are asleep with the dead;
I shall never number them all in my fold,
Or count each sleeping head.
Oh, that mothers could all of them know,
In the days of their children's prime;
That the little ones fair, with the toil and the care,
Have brought them their happiest time."

SONGS OF THE FAITH

Stepping Heavenward

STEPPING Heavenward, Lord, am I,
As the days go fleeting by?
Daisied fields of youth are round me,
Cloudless is the blue o'erhead,
Yet I ponder, as I wander,
Whither goes the path I tread?
It must lead me, lead me ever,
Toward some goal, though distant far,
Onward, neath the sun of morning,
Onward, neath the evening star.
Wisely let me choose my way,
Stepping Heavenward, day by day.

Stepping Heavenward, Lord, am I,
As the noon of Life draws nigh?
Here the rocky steeps of trial,
Bid me choose a smoother way,
There the thorns of self denial,
Press the feet that fain would stray.
Worn and footsore, I must falter,
But the steps are one by one,
Lead me, heavenly hopes that beckon,
Till the toilsome march is done.
Smoothing all the roughening way,
Stepping Heavenward, day by day.

Stepping Heavenward, Lord, am I
  As the days move silently ?
Lo 'twas but a little journey,
  Though no resting place it gave
Aged feet are these that linger
  At the portals of the grave.
Lowly in the darkening distance,
  Lies the path I long have trod,
Glorious pilgrimage, whose ending
  Is the city of my God.
Glad the journey, blest the way,
  Stepping Heavenward, day by day.

Three Days

THREE days, with their records of mortal life,
Went up to the courts of Heaven;
They stood at the gate where the Days all wait,
To be blessed, or banned, or forgiven.
And the angel who looked in their faces said,
"I would hear your mournful story;
Where your brows should be glad, they are dark and sad,
And ye are not days of glory."

Then one said, "I was a Day of Pain,
And I smote while strength was lent me
One who turned his face to the God of grace,
While he blessed the hand that sent me."
"Pass on," said the angel; "O blessed day,
Not in vain was thy smiting given;
Thou hast used a rod from the hand of God,
And thy works shall be owned in Heaven."

Then the next said, "I have walked with Death,
For I was a Day of Sorrow,
But the one I grieved, with a heart bereaved,
Trusted God for a heavenly morrow,"
"Pass on," said the angel, "the soul thou hast touched,
Shall own thy beauteous adorning;
Thy sorrowful face shall be radiant with grace,
And thy name shall be Joy in the morning."

Then the last said "I was a Day of Sin,"
His voice was hopeless and hollow;
"I have looked in vain, again and again,
For a Day of Repentance to follow."
"Pass on," said the angel, "the Judge awaits,
Thy mournful record within,
And the darkest day that can pass this way;
Is a day that is dark with Sin."

A Little Sin

ONCE a little stranger
At my heart did knock;
But I had given to Conscience,
The charge of key and lock.
And she said "his mien is winning,
But I may not let him in;
For I know him, yes, I know him,
And his name is Sin."

Yet still he stood entreating,
With a mild and gentle air;
And his voice was softest music,
And his face was wondrous fair;
Then Impulse pleaded for him,
And Desire said, "let him in,"
But Conscience said, "beware him,
For his name is Sin."

Then Pride and Mirth and Pleasure,
And other friends benign,
Declared that they had seen him
In fairer hearts than mine,
Some said he was a white Sin,
Some said that he was small,
And some assured me boldly,
That he was not Sin at all.

So I said to Conscience boldly,
"You are very grave and old,
I am tired of your preaching,
You have grown so strict and bold.
To assert my independence,
I shall dare to let him in,
I can turn him out as quickly,
If his name be Sin."

So he entered bland and smiling,
But before I shut the door,
He was followed by his kindred,
And they numbered full a score:
At first I thought them comely,
They beguiled with many an art,
But they played the saddest havoc,
With my well swept, garnished heart.

Then I called to faithful Conscience,
"Help me chase them, one and all;"
But she seemed so deaf and feeble,
As to scarcely heed my call.
Yet I battled long and bravely,
Till I drove them from the door,
But they left their mocking memories,
And their footprints on the floor.
Ah, I fear my heart can never,
Be as pure as it has been;
Ere I turned my back on Conscience,
And let in that little Sin.

What to Be

BE brave,
Life is a conflict with a host of foes,
Where friends, as well as enemies, oppose:
Fainthearted, fain are we to quit the field,
But better far it were to die than yield:
We yet may have the victory we crave,
Be brave.

Be true,
Let no dark tint of falsehood blur the white
And stainless page on which we daily write
The record of our lives: Let no dark blot
Of treachery and baseness leave a spot.
To God and to His creatures give their due,
Be true.

Be kind,
The whole creation groans in anguish sore,
Lay not a finger weight of sorrow more,
Upon the suffering heart of man or beast;
Bind up the broken-hearted, help the least.
A mission for our love we all may find,
Be kind.

Be good.
The heavenly kingdom lieth deep within,
Deep are the founts of righteousness and sin.

Be good, and thou shalt be brave, kind and
true
All that thou wouldst and more than that
shalt do.
Heaven shall be thine, life's trials all with-
stood,
Be good.

Roses and Thorns

GOD has made roses, fragrant and fair,
Blossoming, brightening, everywhere;
That His pilgrims who walk in this valley
below,
Should have beauty and fragrance wherever
they go,
The way may be long, but the way must be
fair
For sweetness and beauty are every-where.

God has made thorns, keen and piercing, to
grow,
And all who pluck roses their sharpness must
know.
That His pilgrims who walk in the heavenward
way,
Should never be tempted to linger or stray;
But leaving its pleasures and sorrows should
flee,
To that land where in love He would have
them to be.

Abide With Me

O SAVIOUR, with a soul by grief oppressed,
With faltering feet, I turn me unto thee;
Weary of heart and hand, and far from rest,
Lest I lose Life and Heaven, abide with me.

I have not yielded idly to despair,
Nay I have battled long and faithfully,
Now I can nothing do but lift this prayer,
"O Lord, my Lord, wilt thou abide with me?"

For years my feet have trod a rocky road,
Seeking to find where earthly rest may be;
O rest, sweet rest, I bow beneath my load,
I may not rest, yet, Lord, abide with me.

If thou hast watched through the weary years,
Surely, O Lord, Thy heart hath bled for me,
If Thou dost weep, my griefs have cost Thee tears,
If thou hast pity, Lord, abide with me.

I find no hope, though I have sought till late,
I have no voice to frame a prayer to Thee.
Dumb, blind, and weary with my hapless fate,
I lift my helpless hands, abide with me.

My life is like some bark which angry waves,
Are tossing ever on a shoreless sea;
One hope of port my sinking spirit saves,
'Tis this, that Thou wilt still abide with me.

I see no hope that free from pressing care,
One hour of all my future life shall be;
Yet I can brave the worst and do and dare,
If Thou, my Saviour, dost abide with me

Whisper that I shall know of peace most blest,
That morn shall break and every shadow flee;
Is there a time when I shall surely rest,
Lest I should miss it, Lord, abide with me.

On Easter Morn

OH, day when Easter lilies blow,
And Easter bells are ringing;
While hearts look up and faces glow,
And lips burst into singing.
Oh, in my heart may blossoms sweet,
Spring up in fadeless glory,
And all life's bells in joy repeat
Glad Resurrection's story.

Lord, let not one sweet bud of love,
That blooms, my soul adorning;
Droop 'neath the biting frost of Fate,
Or feel the breath of scorning.

Strong Sun of Righteousness, on me
  Pour forth thy beams of glory;
Let all my heart a garden be
  Of Resurrection story.

Oh, prison doors of doubt and sin,
  My soul sad slumber scorning;
Roll back and let the daylight in
  Of Resurrection morning.
Since Christ has risen, we too, may rise
  To fadeless life and glory;
To prove on earth, as in the skies,
  Glad Resurrection's story.

Face to Face with My Saviour

(L. T. M.)

THE veiled and dark Death-angel,
  Who keeps the gates of the blest;
Had come as God's own evangel,
  To one who had longed for rest.
And as the heavenly portal,
  At his touch flew open wide;
There shone on her face the radiance,
  From the land of the glorified.

Whence was the blessed reflection?
  What vision of delight,
Was granted, a joyful foretaste,
  When faith was lost in sight?

Like to a message from Heaven
Were the sounds that the silence broke
As, "Face to face with my Saviour!"
Were the rapturous words she spoke.

Fairer than pearly city;
Brighter than crown of gold,
Richer than all the treasure
That Paradise can hold;
Must be to the storm tossed spirit,
In sight of its resting place;
The smile of its loved Redeemer;
The light of its Saviour's face.

Speak to us, O beloved,
From the land of light and song;
The world is sad without thee,
And the waiting time seems long
Tell of the paths Elysian,
Thy ransomed feet have trod,
Tell of that blissful vision,
The presence of thy God.

Nay, but we would not call thee,
Back to the earth again;
Safe from its loss and sorrow,
Freed from its woe and pain,
Thine eyes have beheld His beauty;
The King in His matchless grace,
Thou art awake in His likeness,
Thou hast seen His face.

Thou who art glad and glorified,
  Dwell in that home above;
Thou who art safe and satisfied,
  Rest in thy Father's love.
Transfigured and immortal
  And free from suffering's trace,
Where, blest with thy Redeemer,
  Thou seest him face to face.

No Day Without its Deed

NO day without a deed to crown it;
  A motto this for youthful hearts,
Warm with the Saviour's love and yearning,
  To show the zeal that love imparts.
While want and woe and misery plead,
No day without its crowning deed.

No day without its deed, though lowly,
  And all unblest that deed may seem;
Thy motive high shall make it holy;
  And heaven will own and angels deem
Thy work with theirs in sweet accord;
Ministering spirits of the Lord.

Like tiny flowers with sweetest odors;
  Thy little deeds of love shall prove;

The helpful act, the kind word spoken,
The smile of praise, the look of love.
Such works of kindness all must need;
No day without its crowning deed.

Humanity stands all around thee,
And holds its waiting, weary hands;
And God with richest gifts has crowned thee,
Go forth to heed His high commands,
Go, let his love thy footsteps lead;
No day without its crowning deed.

"It Doth Not Yet Appear What We Shall Be"

1st John, 3-2.

WE shall be changed, assurance sweet and blest,
To us, by woes of earth and sin opprest;
Weary at heart, and blind, we long to know
What wondrous change our Father will bestow,
But soft the answer to our listening ear;
"It doth not yet appear."

Our hearts are like to fields of fertile land,
Where Death and Sin have sown with lavish hand.

We do not know what flowers these may bloom,
Beyond the confines of the gloomy tomb.
What fruits may spring where now is waste and drear,
"It doth not yet appear."

Our souls are like to rocks in barren lands,
Flinty and useless mid the glaring sands.
Yet trust we that when God shall strike the blow,
From them shall waters everlasting flow.
What springs of life, how radiant and how clear?
"It doth not yet appear."

Dear Lord, what harmonies our spirits hold,
What silent harps with strings of purest gold;
What music will they make when Thou dost fling,
Thy master hand on each vibrating string.
Such music hath not fallen on mortal ear,
"It doth not yet appear."

What happiness our Saviour, shall be ours,
When we have passed within the heavenly bowers.
Eye hath not seen, ear heard, or heart e'er dreamed
Of what thou hast in store for thy redeemed.
We wait Thy will in us, nor shrink, nor fear,
For it shall soon appear.

Loved and Lost

OFT when sunset clouds are fading,
Or when stars are in the sky,
Or when roses shed their perfume,
As the gentle south winds sigh;
Memory's fingers touch my heartstrings,
And the founts of feeling flow;
For the dear ones, for the fair ones,
Loved and lost so long ago.

Cease, oh Time, to blur those features,
Shining in the misty past,
Give me Echo, those glad voices,
Far too sweet and dear to last.
Early days and dreams have perished,
Sorrow been my conquering foe,
But unchanged to me, the cherished,
Loved and lost so long ago.

Crowd me not too closely, Present,
Future, drop thy beckoning hand,
While I turn to those dim faces,
In the past's enchanted land.
Memory lingers fondly o'er them,
Hope and faith shall whisper low,
God hmiself shall yet restore them,
Loved and lost so long ago.

Faith Never Worries

I HAD grown weary, vexed with sore temptation,
Burdened with sorrow, weighted down with care;
Sad was my spirit o'er earth's tribulation;
Restless my proud heart such a load to bear.

Blindly I struggled with life's problems ever,
Trembling and shrinking neath the chastening rod;
Praying and striving, hoping strong endeavor
Yet would find the pathway to happiness and God.

Entered I one morning a quiet peaceful dwelling,
Where a vine-wreathed motto's curious words I read,
Quickly a tumult of thought my heart was swelling,
"Faith never worries," that was all it said.

"Faith never worries," yet I had been deeming
Faith the blessed portion of a soul like mine;
Waked I that moment from my idle dreaming,
To a view of faith, supreme, divine, sublime.

Faith walketh onward through a world of sorrow;
Trusting him who leads her o'er the toilsome way;
Let's the sunlit radiance of a glorious morrow
Gild the clouds that shadow all her path today.

"Faith never worries," views each slight vexation
With a smile of meekness, saying, "it is small."
Whispers to the spirit full of tribulation,
"Peace, look up in hope, thy Father doeth all."

"Faith never worries," bravely does each duty,
Thinking, "He who sent it knoweth what is best;"
Twines the roughest crosses with some flowers of beauty,
Rests its head in patience on its Saviour's breast.

Faith sails serenely o'er the raging billow,
Trusting in her pilot midst its wild alarms;
Though the storm surrounds her, comforting her pillow,
While she feels beneath her the everlasting arms.

"Faith never worries," bid us rest, oh Father,
From the ceaseless worries we have cherished long;
Nurtured and caressed them, now our souls would rather
Leave them all and burst from sighing into song.

"Faith never worries," blesséd gift, we need it,
When the waves of trial our quivering life-boats fill,
"Faith never worries," hush our souls and heed it,
We shall hear the voice that whispers "Peace, be still."

"Faith never worries" walk we with assurance,
Through the mist and shadows, looking to the light;
Hoping longing, yearning, yet with calm endurance,
For our better portion, where faith is lost in sight.

Bells at Evening-Time

I SAT at my door in the evening,
When the heat and the toil were o'er
And saw the mists of the twilight,
Close down on the river shore.

And I thought alone of the labor
Of the day that had slowly passed,
And that night with its cheerless shadow,
Was shrouding it all at last.

When far o'er the hills and the river,
Sweet music seemed to chime,
As the bells of the distant city
Rang out at the evening time.

Then my heart leaped out of the shadows,
And I said, "somewhere, somewhere,
There is light and joy and music,
And the voice of praise and prayer."

And my soul with them went upward,
O'er the things of sense and time,
When called by the bells of the distance,
That rang at the evening time.

And I mused, "when comes the evening,
  And the toils of life have passed,
And the fogs on the deathly river,
  Are gathering thick and fast,

"May the soul be touched with rapture,
  From some celestial chime,
And the bells of the heavenly city
  Ring sweet at the evening time."

A Wish

THIS for the day of life I ask:
  Some all absorbing, useful task;
And when 'tis wholly, truly done,
  A tranquil rest at set of sun.

A Thought

'TIS a grand, 'tis a glorious thing to stay
On this beautiful earth such a day as today:
But what if a voice should fall on mine ear,
"It is not for thee, my child, come here."
What then? Why only to calmly say,
"I had thought to do much ere the close of day;
And the glory and beauty of life are dear,
But I turn to the darkness without a fear."
"Ready for God?" Oh, how could I be?
But God is always ready for me.
Defiled without and corrupt within,
Weary with suffering, dark with sin;
I rest in His mercy, I trust in His love,
Which is higher than all of the heights above,
Which is deeper than all of the depths beneath,
Is lovelier than life, and is stronger than death.
No merit, no merit, and yet I stand,
For I rest in the hollow of God's own hand.

The Easter Lily's Mission

IN the glow of my eastern window,
When the day was newly born,
A lily opened its petals
To the light of the Easter morn.
Glorious bells of beauty,
Pure as the heavens above,
Spotless as perfect duty,
With a fragrance sweet as love.

I bore it to the chancel,
Blossom of stainless grace,
And the hues of a rosy window
Fell on its upturned face.
Sweet songs of the resurrection
Rose up through the vastness dim,
And the lily's incense floated
With the songs of praise to Him.

Then I said, "a better mission
Shall be thine ere the day is dead."
And I bore my flower to a sufferer
Who lay on a narrow bed.
And I said, "it sprang in its beauty,
From a bulb that was dark and cold,
And was hid till its semblance perished
Deep down in the darksome mold."

A light that was more than mortal
Shone on the anguished face,
As if from the opened portal
Of the heavenly dwelling place,
Type of the resurrection
Was that glorious, perfect bloom,
Death of the earthly body,
Life beyond the tomb.

Such was the lily's mission,
Comfort and joy to shed;
Hope is there for the dying,
Life shall come to the dead.
Yea, from the soul's dark dwelling,
Hid in the earth away,
Shall spring the flower immortal,
On resurrection day.

The Upward Way

WE walked together friends and I;
The mountain path was steep and high.

Below, in blossom bowered dell,
Reposed the homes we loved full well;

We trod the uneven path along,
And cheered our climbing with a song.

Suddenly, darkness round us fell,
We lost our glimpse of height and dell.

A blinding mist shut out the day,
We groped and feared to lose our way.

Hearts sank till some one called aloud,
"Come on, dear friends, we are in a cloud."

A few more steps and floods of light,
Broke dazzling on our raptured sight.

Below the mist, but round us now
The sunlight of the mountain's brow;

Its radiant glow, its air so sweet,
And all the world was at our feet.

Such ecstacy would soon repay
The perils of the toilsome way.

Far down in mellowed distance fair,
Our homes lay, bathed in evening's air;

And forms of those by love endeared,
Like distant shadowy specks appeared.

"Would we might speak to them," we cry,
"And hear some word of sweet reply."

Then suddenly, from distant spire,
Whose cross gleamed like a tongue of fire;

Floated the sound of vesper bell,
In tones that said, "all's well, all's well."

Then to my heart a thought was given,
Is this like earth, and death, and heaven?

A toilsome climbing up the height;
A rapture on the summit bright.

But, oh, between, the mist of death,
The stumbling feet, the bated breath.

Give us some voice to cry aloud,
"Keep heart, press on, 'tis but a cloud."

God's Will to Me

THY will be done! Ah, what do I say,
As my lips repeat it from day to day?
I journey ever, but do not know,
Whence I came, or whither I go.
A Power I may not understand,
Is ever my guide through this unknown land,
The One Who leads me I cannot see,
But I ask that His will may be done in me.

I am sure that He willeth His love unto me,
And blessings outnumbering the sands of the sea.
He guideth my feet in such beautiful ways,
And crowneth my life with the happiest days;
A cup that o'erfloweth with blessings is mine,
And a heart that looks up to the Giver divine.
So, joyful and grateful my spirit shall be,
As I ask that His will may be done in me.

He willeth, O great is the mystery;
He willeth sorrow and death to me.
The heart which His blessings have caused to o'erflow
Must bow 'neath its burden of anguish and woe.
I tremble, for suffering and pain shall be mine,
And even my life I must shortly resign.

And yet I will ask, on bended knee,
That the will of my God may be done in me.

He willeth, though sinful and mortal I be,
He willeth a work in His vineyard for me.
He willeth me patience and love and faith,
And a hope that can look through the portals
of death.
Mine eye hath not seen, and my heart cannot
dream
His grace to the one He hath died to redeem.
And sin and sorrow and death shall flee,
When the will of my God is done in me.

He willeth, O marvellous grace to me,
He willeth me immortality!
He willeth me life when this life shall cease,
He willeth me heaven and Christ and peace.
He willeth me spotless righteousness,
And the radiant beauty of holiness!
Ah, with wonder and praise that such things
can be,
Do I pray that His will may be done in me.

O glorious will of my God to me,
Its wonderful outline is all I can see,
O marvellous grace that this will of mine,
May be merged in the will of the Father divine.
"Thy will be done!" Most excellent words;
From the weakest of worms to the Lord of
Lords,
"Thy will be done;" and thy will must be,
That my will shall be Thine through Eternity.

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